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EASTERN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCER

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Hanoi Finally Acknowledges East German Delegation

Hanoi radio announced on 10 April the visit of the party-government delegation led by politburo member Kurt Hager which arrived in the North Vietnamese capital on 4 April. (See Intelligencer, 5 April) The announcement was taken from a North Vietnamese Foreign Ministry communique and implied that the visit was over.

The delegation included Gerhard Weiss, Deputy Premier who is also a foreign trade expert, Josef Hegen, Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister, and Lt. Gen. Siegfried Weiss, a deputy Defense Minister. The GDR's ambassador to Hanoi, Wolfgang Bergold, was also a member of the delegation.

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COMMENT: The Hager visit follows a pattern established by other Eastern European countries which have sent high ranking delegations to Hanoi over the past two years. Trade and aid probably were discussed. A subsequent report carried by East German radio on 11 April revealed that the Hager delegation had gone on to Pyongyang, North Korea.

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Bulgaria Enacts New Family Code

A series of laws governing family relationships have been passed by the sixth session of the Fifth Bulgarian National Assembly. According to Svetla Daskalova, Minister of Justice, the new code's major features include: the incorporation of joint ownership of both movable property and real estate acquired during the marriage; the prohibiting of marriages between first cousins; the assumption that if a marriage has ceased to exist in fact, it also should be terminated legally; the granting of a divorce when a "serious and firm" desire to end the marriage exists on the part of both spouses; and the stipulation that parents who are separated or divorced must support offsprings who are full time students and unmarried, until they reach the age of 25.

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COMMENT: The new laws, which replace the 1946 family code, have been several years in the making and are apparently designed to increase the number of viable marriages while simultaneously contributing to the number of well cared for offsprings. Bulgaria's declining birthrate has forced the regime to address itself to the problems of the family.

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